

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

Background

Suburban Residential includes residential development with a variety of housing types, including subdivisions, at a variety of densities, along with recreational uses.

For the purpose of this Plan, two different categories of Suburban Residential are identified on the map: Existing and New areas. The Existing Suburban Residential area is generally located in the southeastern quadrant of the planning area. As its name implies, it is the area where most of the existing suburban residential pattern has taken place. In this case, the policy focus should be oriented towards ensuring that new suburban infill is compatible as it continues to build out. The New Suburban Residential area depicts the future residential growth of the community, generally to the west and north of the Existing area. Its location is a function of its proximity to the existing growth area as well as the planned availability of sanitary sewer service.

The Suburban Residential area will be predominately residential, including a variety of housing types to serve different family sizes and life situations from entry level to retirement. Subdivisions at a variety of densities and a broad range of housing types will continue to be the prevalent development form. The New Residential has been broken into three areas: SW, NW and NE. Because of the differences between them such as sewer availability, topography and current land uses, they will be discussed separately.

New Suburban – SW

Background

The SW New Suburban includes a diverse mix of uses: a Town park, a public golf course, an approved SF-2 custom development, open farm land, two developments currently under consideration by the town (one, a TND), and a central core of approximately 80 existing 3-30 acre residential/rural properties used for horses and artisan farms. It is adjacent to the village of Eagletown, the thoroughfares of State Road 32 and 146th Streets, a school transportation center and school as well as a number of developed subdivisions.

The challenge of this area is to allow for appropriate development with commercial areas and higher density residential in Eagletown, along State Road 32 with decreasing densities to the south and west as larger lot residential areas are approached

THE KEY TO MAKING THIS AREA FUNCTION TO EVERYONES'S
SATISFACTION AND MAINTAINING PROPERTY VALUES AND QUALITY OF

LIFE, IS APPROPRIATE TRANSITIONS AND BUFFERING. Most of the properties currently owned by residents living in this area are not subject to development. Those seeking to develop in this area must have an enhanced sensitivity to existing residents and present designs that make significant transitions to both the more developed areas to the east and the more rural areas in the center and to the west.

Many existing properties along 156th, 161st, 166th, Shelborne, Towne, Ditch, and Little Eagle Creek Avenue already exist in what could be defined as a residential equestrian (RE) or artisan farm classification and should be both protected and preserved. The central golf course property, if developed, should be developed by conservation subdivision standards to maintain the rural feel of the central portion of this area.

Development Policies

- Require all development to have public sewer and water, paved streets. Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks are to be included as the context dictates.
- Design developments such that back yards are not adjacent to collector or arterial streets unless uniform attractive screening is provided.
- Encourage innovative architecture of a character appropriate to Westfield (see Residential Design Standards).
- Prevent monotony of design and color.
- Encourage a diverse range of home styles in individual subdivisions.
- Emphasize connectivity between subdivisions to avoid creating isolated islands of development.
- Permit new development only when the transportation network is sufficient for the added traffic volumes. Based upon traffic studies, developers should make appropriate improvements to mitigate traffic impacts resulting from the new development.
- Promote flexible design that maximizes open space preservation by regulating density rather than lot size. This approach permits a wide range of lot dimensions (area, frontage, setbacks, etc.) and a variety of housing types (detached, semi-detached, attached) to serve multiple markets (traditional families, single-parent households, empty-nesters, etc.).
- Encourage quality and useable open space through incentives (density bonuses) based upon density rather than minimum lot sizes and widths.
- While it is expected that over time the few remaining large agricultural tracts in this area will be converted to residential development or other uses, this development must be context sensitive. As projects move south from State Road 32, north from 146th Street and west from Ditch Road, they should decrease in density and provide increased open space. This can be accomplished either through increased lot size or by clustering the open space at the “transition end” of the property where the new development abuts a dissimilar property. Clustering of development with higher density should be considered especially where the property abuts industrial, commercial or higher density residential property, while encouraging the preservation of open spaces elsewhere.

- Opportunities exist for conservation subdivisions as well as TND's. TND's with modestly scaled retail are appropriate only along the thoroughfares of State Road 32 or 146th St. A conservation subdivision opportunity exists with the golf course property in the middle of this area.
- At interfaces between existing large lot residential property and new residential developments, minimum buffering requirements shall provide 100 feet of reforestation buffer yard to preserve the rural environment currently enjoyed by those individuals who purchased large parcel home sites. (See red line on attached map)
- The use of unnatural earth mounding and fencing is to be discouraged in favor of natural, reforested or naturally landscaped areas, notwithstanding some land restructuring may facilitate better buffering and a more natural landscape . Transitional areas should be of a *reforestation buffer* type with the use of native trees, shrubs, and grasses chosen in lieu of manicured or highly maintained buffers of ornamental and non-native species.
- Transitional areas and reforestation buffers should be constructed at the start of development to allow maximum time for growth and also for buffering during the build out phase.
- Locate roadways and house lots so as to respect natural features and to maximize exposure of lots to open space (directly abutting or across the street). "Single-loaded" streets (with homes on one side only) should be used to maximize open space visibility, thus increasing real estate values and sales, while costing no more than streets in conventional subdivisions (due to savings from narrower lot frontages).
- Provide more attractive streetscapes –
 - Minimize front loading garages
 - Provide garage set backs from the front façade
 - Minimize design/materials repetition
 - Avoid orienting homes so the back sides face the community

Appropriate Land Uses

- Single- Family Detached dwellings
- Artisan Farms, Equestrian Uses, multi-acre single family homes
- Low Density, High Quality Multi-Family Housing
- TND's with small scale retail
- Conservation Subdivision
- Institutional Uses
- Recreational Uses
- Planned Mixed-use Development

Sidebars/Definitions

Artisan farm – a small farm with owners living on site that produces goods or services for the local table market (not the commodity market). This may include orchards, tree nurseries, horses, llamas, alpacas, sheep, goats, chickens, hay and vegetables.

Commodity farm – commercial farming done on a large scale that sells to a larger market rather than a small local market.

Conservation Subdivision – A residential subdivision where homes are clustered on the property in order to maintain a substantial amount of open space and maintain a rural atmosphere. It should meet the following criteria:

- Open space must be a minimum of 60% of gross acreage
- Open space must be connected
- Open space must preserve primary conservation areas
- Density is a maximum of 1 unit per 3 gross acres with potential density bonuses as described above
- Homes must be clustered on the property to minimize the cost of long term maintenance of infrastructure and to maximize the preservation of ecological and environmental features
- As many lots as possible must front or back onto open space
- Building materials must blend in with nature
- There must be a perimeter buffer yard of open space and natural plantings along external roads and adjoining properties to screen clustered homes from view in order to maintain the rural pastoral appearance of the area
- Preserve existing topography and avoid mass grading
- Have an open space management plan and covenants that run with the land to permanently protect the open space

Primary conservation and natural areas:

Wetland	Steep Slopes (>12%)	Prairies
Upland woods	Streams, creeks	
Orchards	Pasture	

Reforestation Buffer – A buffer, typically of 100 feet or more in width, that is planted in native trees, shrubs, and grasses. Reforestation buffers are typically low or no maintenance, are a mix of species, and provide a more natural look to the landscape. They are wide enough to completely shield existing adjacent properties. They provide animal habitats as well as privacy to adjacent landowners.

Residential Equestrian – A district established to maintain and conserve a rural, country-like atmosphere and encourage equestrian uses and artisan farms rather than residential uses. Residential development may occur but is secondary to the rural equestrian purpose of this district. Lot area requirements of this district are more restrictive than established residential districts: typically at a density of one home per three/five acres.

Rural – Living in or characteristic of farming or country life, an agrarian or agricultural society, fields or open country.

TND- Traditional neighborhood design or “new urbanism” developments characterized by the presence of residential, retail, work, recreation, and public areas within walking distance for most residents. Higher density allows the retail uses to thrive and supports the preservation of less dense residential areas and open spaces in other areas.